Map B

Lewis and Harris

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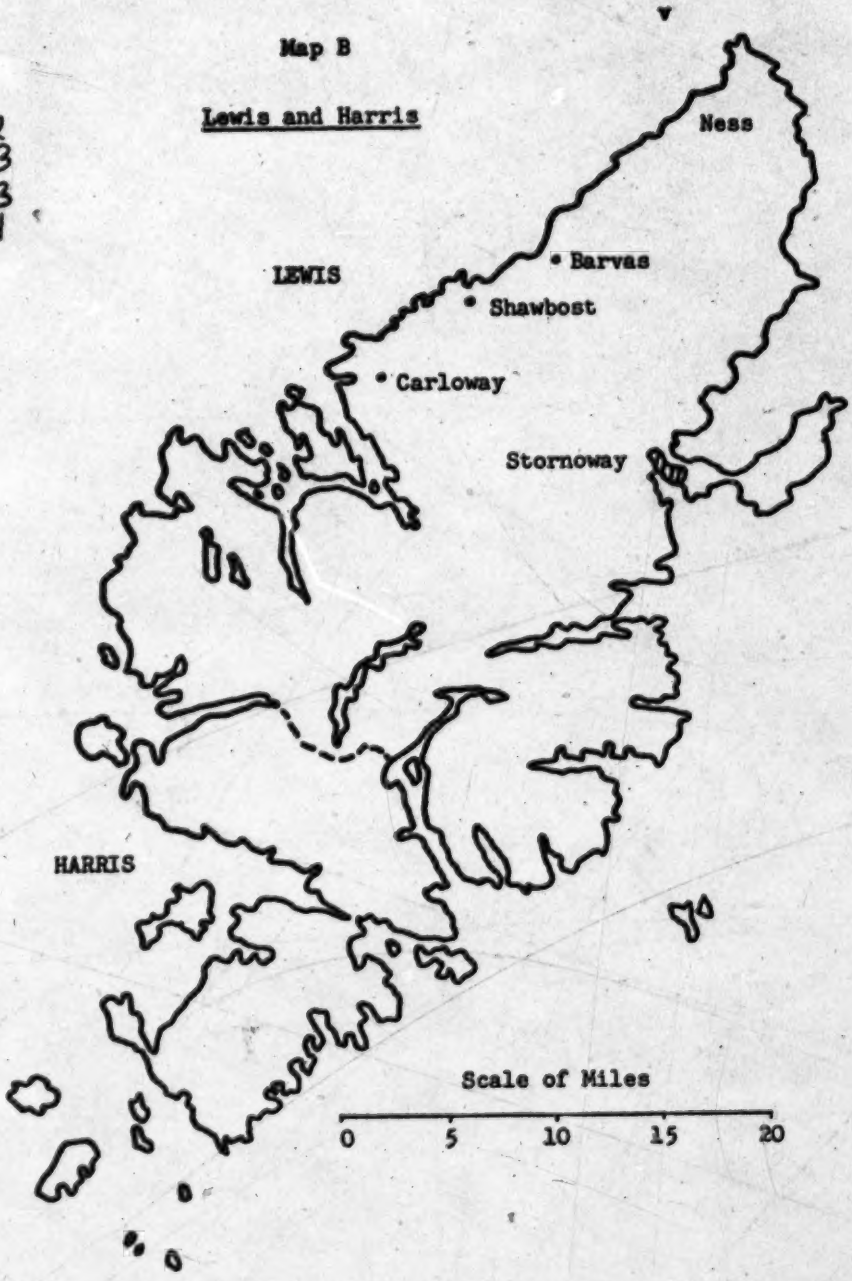

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[131] The Outer Hebrides, a chain of islands over a hundred miles long which lie to the northwest of the Scottish mainland, are part of "Ross and Cromarty" and "Inverness," two of the seven crofting counties of Scotland (see Map A). The seven crofting counties [103] (Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Caithness, Orkney and Shetland) constitute the scenically beautiful but agriculturally marginal land often referred to as the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. 101 The word "Highland" also refers to features of social 197 life such as crofting tenure, strong community feeling and Gaelic-speaking which are characteristic of many communities in both the Highlands and Islands as well as in cities such as Glasgow in which persons from the Highlands and Islands have settled. For example, a Gaelic speaker whose parents came from the Islands and settled in Glasgow may be called a "Glasgow Highlander." The first four crofting counties listed above have a large percentage of Gaelic speakers. In the national [162] census of 1961, 82.3% of the 32,607 inhabitants of the Outer Hebrides were Gaelic speakers.

131 Lewis and Harris, a single body of land which is 133 sometimes referred to as two islands because the mountainous southern section called Harris differs markedly from the flat, northern moorland of Lewis, is the northernmost island in the Outer Hebrides (see Map B).

Hundreds
103 of place names are known to the villagers 6
which are not marked on any map. These place names
[193] constitute part of the oral tradition of a population
which has lived in a confined geographical area for
generations.

632 In most of Lewis, village and township coincide.
621 The village of Shawbost is composed of two townships,
311 South Shawbost in which the crofts splay outward like
423 a fan from roads which curve over an uneven landscape,
[363] and North Shawbost which is composed of linear streets
(see Map C), to which the crofts are perpendicular.
Each township has its own common grazing land, and its
own grazing committee. All of South Shawbost and part
of North Shawbost belong to one private estate (which
includes other townships to the southwest), and most
of North Shawbost belongs to an estate which extends to
Barvas. Beyond the fact that non-crofters in South
Shawbost have found it easier to acquire crofting status,
little difference between the two townships appears to
be due to their belonging to different estates. As
[427] elsewhere in crofting regions, the landlords of the
[529] two estates are concerned mainly with the sporting
potential of their land.

632 The two townships are themselves divided into named
neighborhoods (cf. Vallee 1955 for a discussion of
"natural neighborhoods" in crofting areas).

000 "natural neighborhoods" in crofting areas). The
363 northernmost street of North Shawbost is called Carnan
103 (carn = a heap of stones), and the street parallel to it, by the loch and the sea, is Baile Stigh ("the town within," i.e., in toward the sea. In everyday speech, [196] one goes "in" to the sea and "out" to the moor, a reference which probably derives from the days when fishing was extremely important. The sea was then the focus, from which the village expanded "outward." Today the road is the source of goods and transport). Part of the Baile Stigh is sometimes called Gearraidh Buidhe (buidhe means "yellow"; gearraidh is the land from which peat has been stripped). The Baile Stigh intersects the main road and continues toward the moor, where it becomes New Shawbost. New Shawbost, once called New North Shawbost, is also called Pairc, referring to a farm which existed there before the land was turned into crofts.

632 The neighborhood regions of South Shawbost are less easily
363 recognizable as the land is not divided into linear
103 streets. To the people of North Shawbost, South Shawbost is simply Baile Thall, "the town over yonder." (Residents of South Shawbost also refer to North Shawbost as Baile Thall, but also frequently refer to the different streets.) Within South Shawbost, several neighborhoods are distinguished on the basis of the clustering of houses,

632 distinctive geographical features, and nearness to the
363 sea: Ceann a Stigh (or Ceann a Stigh Bhaile, or Baile
•103 Stigh, the "town" at the "head" of the road "in" by the sea), Buailebhir (an area identified with the keeping of cattle), Gearraidh Mor, Creagan, Pluic, and Mach a Chul ("out the back," by a road built relatively recently). A street which leaves the main road and cuts into the moor, or common grazing land, is called Grinnbhat, from the name of a nearby loch.

511 The presence of a large Harris Tweed mill in
[348] Shawbost has contributed to a high standard of living
[288] within the village. It is estimated that only 25% of
[493] the households of rural Lewis have cars; about 50% of the households in Shawbost possess them. In 1970
[342] Shawbost had only one occupied tigh dubh, or "black house" built of dry stone and roofed with thatch, which to many islanders symbolizes a past life of poverty and
[404] adverse times. Modern appliances such as refrigerators,
[251] deep freezers and electric toasters are common in
[207] Shawbost. Most homes also have television sets, and
[206] many have telephones.

288 The mill in Shawbost employs between 60 and 70
463 persons to dye, card and spin yarn, to prepare the yarn in warps which are then delivered to weavers who work in their own homes, and to darn, wash and market the

175 423 427 single tack, for which the tacksman, who was a relative of Seaforth's Chamberlain, paid L247/10/8, 10 sheep, 9 stones butter, and 3 bolls of meal. The Bragar rental mentions scallags who were not listed because they were not smallholders; rather, they worked for the tacksman for a certain number of days per week, in return for which they received ground to cultivate and on which they might build a house. There were probably scallags in Shawbost as well; a section of common land near the sea, which bears the marks of old cultivation, is today called Blar na Scallag (field of the scallags).

The evidence is that, rather than being the egalitarian society portrayed by many idealistic proponents of crofting society today, the society living in the area we now know as the crofting counties was composed of fairly differentiated tenants and subtenants. [103] Allotments of land were called penny, half-penny, and farthing lands (Walker 1812: 56; Gray 1952: 48); place names such as "Five-penny Borve" indicate this history of land tenure in Lewis. The 43 tenants in Shawbost in 1726 paid rents varying from L3/10/4 to L9/7/4 (Scots money, which was 1/12 of the English). The differences in rent gave them different shares in the arable ground and different shares in grazing rights on the common ground.

behavior characteristic of the dominant group; but for those that remain in the village, the language serves a unifying function, although its form is limited in diversity of elements.

Jokes are most humorous when told in Gaelic; and conversation is punctuated with Gaelic proverbs and old stories. There is a vast oral lore, expressed in Gaelic, of the village and generations of its members and their characteristics and escapades, a dense map of human events. All of these tales, proverbs and jokes have been told a thousand times, but retain their unifying function. When speaking of today's children who do not go to the sheiling, a man says sadly, "They won't have our memories; this place will mean less to them than it does to us." The moor is not an empty wasteland, but a map of memories. Thousands of place names are known, and behind every place name is a story. The major landmarks such as mountains, lochs and headlands tend to have Norse names, from the days when the Norsemen raided and settled along the island coasts; but the smaller hillocks and fields and bends in the stream have Gaelic names, for example, Sheiling of the One Night, Field of the Slaves, Slope of the Stone Boys, Hillock of William's Sheiling. To know these place names and their histories is to participate in a distinct community, which has been made even more distinct by contrast with the dominant society.

2: Thompson H-4, 5 (no date) 1973 ES10 Highland Scots ES10
Lewis and Harris

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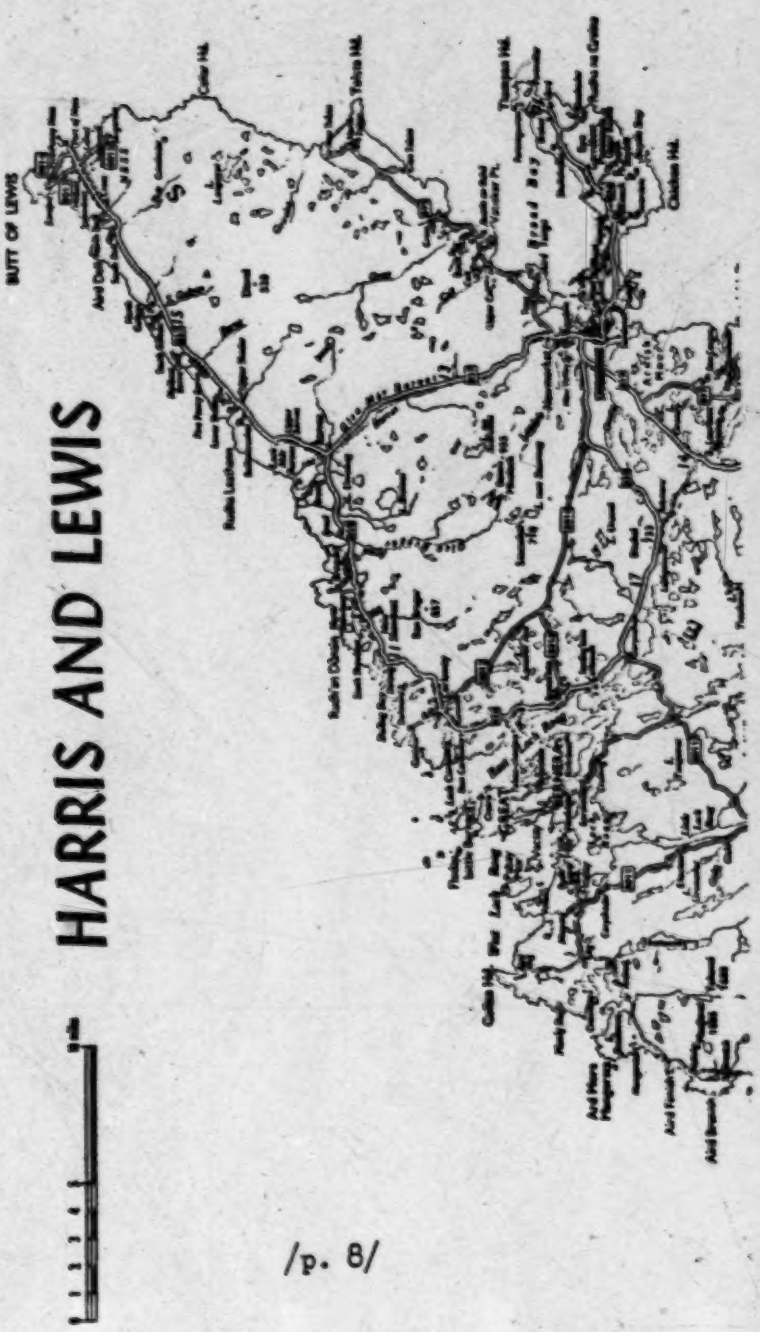

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2:: Thompson H-4, 5 (no date) 1973 ES10 Highland Scots ES10
Lewis and Harris

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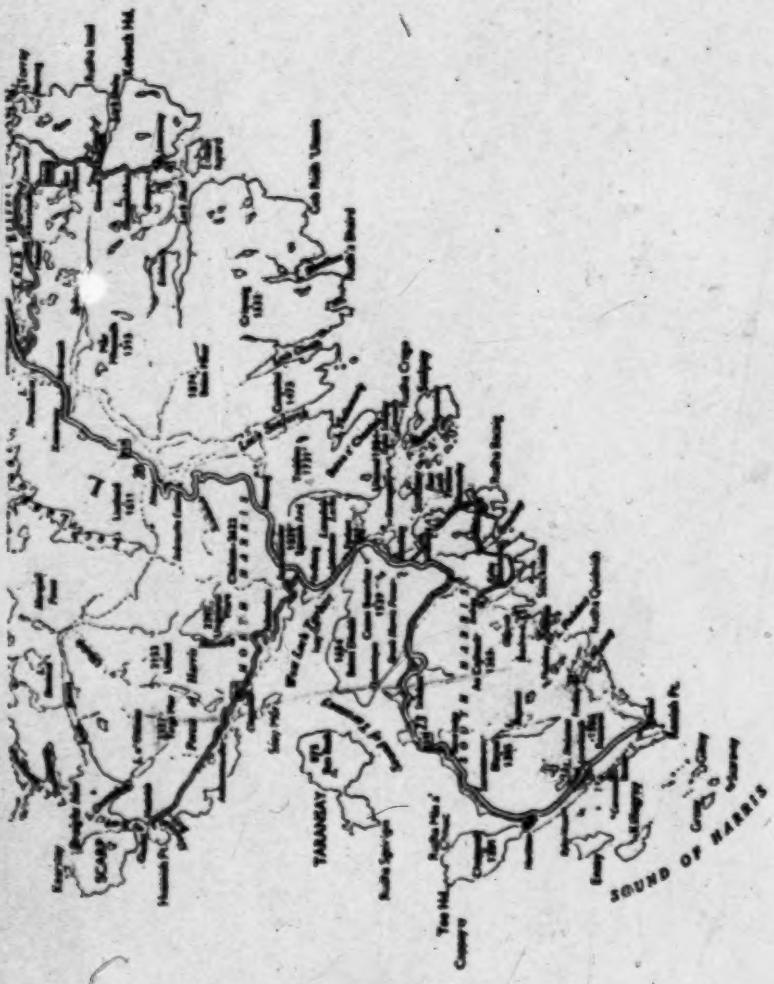

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3 HISTORY

175 FOR all that Harris and Lewis are remote and relatively inaccessible, their history has not been particularly insular. Out of all proportion to its size, the island has made a significant contribution to each developing phase of Scottish, British and Commonwealth history. Even European and American history have Hebridean touches. In a local context, each district in the island has a parti-coloured backcloth of history, of tradition, and of story against which life and events were enacted by each succeeding generation.

175 Before the era of charters, Harris was a political part of Lewis. 103 The name is derived from 'heradh', meaning a district (equivalent to the modern parish). The word 'Lewis' has been tackled by etymologists who have extracted such meanings as 'light', 'Liot's dwelling', 'wharf' and the romantic 'songhouse'. But nearer the mark is 'a place abounding in pools', which it is. In its earliest form 'Lewis' appears in an Irish MS, the original of which is ascribed to a contemporary of the Irish king Brian Boroimhe (Brian Boru of the pipes fame).

The MS describes the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, at which Norsemen from Lewis fought against the Irish. It has been suggested that even before this time there was another name for Lewis. Pliny, Ptolemy and Solinus all place on their maps a variation of 'Hebrides': Hebudes, Ebudae. According to a Gaulish glossary, 'ebudae' means *terrains incultes*; and 'ebeid' is a British word meaning cornless. Solinus, writing in the third century BC, states that the inhabitants of the Hebrides did not know the use of corn, and lived entirely on fish and milk.

PREHISTORIC REMAINS

172 Where does history begin? That there was a pre-history is evidenced mainly by the multilithic and monolithic erections to be found in various parts of the island. The abundance and character

HISTORY

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Artist's impression of some of the twelfth-century walrus-ivory chess pieces found at Uig in 1831

as beaker ware, from its distinctive shape, were recovered. The diet of these early Harris folk appears to have been largely shellfish, particularly limpets. The house of the latest period is ruined; three courses of walling were revealed.

• 103 648 Placenames have often been a mirror of history. The biggest event in Harris and Lewis's history was the Norse invasion, commemorated in the names of many townships that still exist: Ness (nes, headland), Arnish (Ari's ness), Erisort (Eri's firth), Carloway (Karli's bay). But the Gaelic is there too: Loch Shell (Sealg, chase or hunt, thus endorsing Dean Monro's statement that this loch bordered a deer-forest), and similar topographical features. While the Norse names are to be found on the island coasts (the bosts and stads), the Gaelic names are largely found in the interior (eg, Airidhs—sheilings).

8 STORNOWAY

632 829 STORNOWAY is the only real town in the Hebrides. Some even say that it is the only real town in the world, as its basic living patterns are those of the countryside from which it sprang. It has always been held in high regard by the [539] islanders. In the past it was regarded as one of the most important places in the civilised world: a saying attributed to a primitive native has passed into a proverb: *'steornabhagh mhor a' chaisteal —baile 's modha 'th'air an t-saoghal gu leir ach Bail'-ath-Cliath an Eirinn—'s iongantach nach eil an Righ fhein a' tighinn a comhnuigh ann!'* ('Stornoway the great, with its Castle, the largest town in the wide world, except Dublin in Ireland; surprising it is that the King himself does not reside therein!') The affectionate [103] name for the town is 'Portrona', Port of Seals, which it is. A son [504] of Stornoway once said, 'The founder of Portrona must have been some sea rover with a good eye for a refuge from the storm and the peril of his calling. No matter what winds rage outside, within the bay the mariner may drop his anchor, furl his sails, and take his ease.'

*175 632 [133] When the Vikings first came to the western isles of what was later in history to become Scotland, they found a sandy spit of land on which they could beach their longships in a sheltered bay. It was, however, more than a haven; it was a place in which to settle down and rear the first of many generations. Later the Norse-derived MacLeods took advantage of an outcrop of rock beside the beach to build a fortress. Later again a greenheart pier, [504] and later still a concrete wharf, have given the town the outward symbols of economic and social significance.

632 133 Stornoway owes its origin to the Stornoway Beds, a sedimentary formation much younger than the Lewisian gneiss. These Beds have had two effects. First, their existence and formation allowed a deep indentation, giving a good harbour with a protecting isthmus not far way. The harbour itself is due to the erosion of these

THE OTHER ISLANDS

north-west of Gallan Head. There are seven main islands, all small, high and cliffbound, and a number of rock stacks and islets. All are uninhabited. Eilean Mhor, the largest, of 39 acres, has an automatic light. Dean Monro's description of the islands as 'nouder manurit, nor inhabit, but full of grein high hills and scheipe' still holds, for sheep are taken annually from Lewis to the grazing on the Flannans. Their name is said to be derived from the ninth-century St Flann, whose saintly influence was recognised during the centuries when men from Lewis visited the islands for their harvest of wool, wild fowl and feathers.

The Flannans were the scene of a great sea-mystery: the complete and utter disappearance of three men from the lighthouse at the turn of this century. In December 1900, the lighthouse, with its 140,000-candlepower beam 283 ft above sea level, was a year old. It had taken four years to build instead of the estimated two. All the materials had to be swung up piecemeal from the boats and hauled up the almost sheer 70 ft cliffs to the top. That month a passing ship, the *Archer*, noticed that the Flannans light was out; a message was sent to the Flannans shore station at Breasclete, Lewis, and the *Hesperus*, preparing to pay a Christmas visit to the lighthouse, got under weigh.

Its crew landed and searched the island, but found no trace of the missing keepers. In the lighthouse was an uncanny silence. The fire was dead. The clock had stopped ticking. The beds had been made up in the clean, clinical way of all sailors. And in the galley, the pots, pans and dishes sparkled their welcome to the searchers. In the lamp-room the lamp was cold. The wicks had been trimmed and the lenses polished. The logbook showed a last entry on 0900 hours, Saturday 15 December. In the subsequent investigation some theories were offered in explanation of the disappearance, but none quite fitted. The mystery remains, a haunting, unexorcised cloud hovering over the island.

The Shiant Isles

Turning to the east coast of Lewis, in the parish of Lochs are the Shiant Isles, about 4 miles off-shore, across the Sound of Shiant (Gaelic: charmed, enchanted). There are three islands in the group: Eilean an Tigh (House Island), Garbh Eilean (Rough

3: Geddes K-4, 5 (1919-1952) 1955 ES10 Highland Scots
Lewis and Harris

Scotland had begun to lag since her pioneering effort from 1750 to 1880.

Fortunately, Scotland is now recognising that in peat reclamation, on the one hand, and the improvement of rough grazing, or at least its maintenance, on the other, there lies a problem of national importance. More than half the land surface of the country consists of mountain and heath land used for grazing, not including 'deer forests' from which sheep had been altogether excluded. The arable land of Scotland is less than one-sixth of the whole, with about one-twelfth in addition under permanent grass. Moreover, since most of the enclosed land is distant from the area of rough grazing, the latter is partly wasted. The difficulties of soil and sea and of the whole economic situation are great, and must be understood.

(B) THE ISLAND LANDSCAPE, LAND-FORMS AND GEOLOGY

1. *Aspects of the Isle*

Lewis-and-Harris, the most northerly isle of the Outer Hebrides, and the largest, is roughly lozenge-shaped. Although only thirty miles in width, it is over sixty miles in length. Attached to Harris parish is the little isle of Berneray, half a dozen miles farther south. It puzzles the stranger that, while the archipelago of the Outer Hebrides is best known to the inhabitants as "The Long Island", Lewis (or the Lews) and Harris, which actually form one island, are spoken of as separate islands.[1] Yet nothing could be more natural. Before the making of

[1] "The Long Island", Gaelic *An Eilean Fada*, as a name for the Outer Hebrides has the sanction of traditional usage, as Alexander Carmichael noted in his Introduction to *Carmina Gadelica* (vol. i, 1900; and 1928).

3s Geddes K-4,5 (1919-1952) 1955 ES10 Highland Scots
Lewis and Harris

241 824 (Chondrus), for example, is used as a thickener of milk to make a cheese-like mould. Dulse is also plucked.[1]

222 182 241 226 The type of coastal form and vegetation alters the relative importance of crofting and fishing—and the balance chosen is significant. (1) Where the coastline is smooth, and leads inland from sandy machar with its clover to sand-ameliorated ' black land ' of smooth topography lending itself to ploughing, and the whole is backed by extensive pastures, the tract is relatively well-off for crofting but may be ill-placed for fishing. (2) Where the coast is either indented or salient with rocky loch-sides or steep promontory cliffs, a rolling or rocky topography, little shell sand, and (on the promontories) a shortage of pasture, it is ill-placed for crofting; but it is favourable to fishing either by virtue of sheltered sea lochs or of salient promontories, one or other side of which tends to give relative shelter to the fishing ground (chosen according to the direction of the wind, to avoid being blown on to a dangerous, lee shore). Hence the site of a settlement has had much to do with the choice and opportunities for a communal vocation, from prehistory to the present time, as we shall see.

• 103 634 175 Significant local characteristics emerge in the names of the ancient districts (inset with the Map of Vegetation, Fig. 8). In the north is Ness (Norse, ' nose ' or cape); along the west is Cladach (Gaelic, a stony beach); while in South Harris the western ' Machar ' contrasts with the eastern ' Bays '. ' Park ', a sheep-run in the early nineteenth century, was the Norse ' East-fell '. In contrast, the parishes of Lewis centre on four churches, linked to [491] the road-system. This radiates from Stornoway in five directions: east, NE., NW., SW., and south to Tarbert,

[173] [1] Pulling dulse (*Rhodymenia*) is one of the ' delights ' of Iona as told in a poem long attributed to Saint Columba!

3: Geddes K-4, 5 (1919-1952) 1955 ES10 Highland Scots
Lewis and Harris

Harris; South Harris is ringed by a road, extended recently to take in the more isolated 'Bays' townships.

2. *The Crofts and Crofting Ways*

The prevailing modern unit of cultivation and tenure in the Islands is the croft, the land held individually by each small landholder or 'crofter'. The Anglo-Scottish term croft (Gaelicised as *croit*) meant steadily cropped, infield land, manured and never left fallow, and distinguished from the unmanured outfield with its long fallows and poor out-turn. This term came into common use in the Highlands and Isles in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the splitting up of the older unit of cultivation and tenure, the small joint farm, with its little team of fellow-workers or 'small tenants'. By 1830 group tenure had been replaced by individual holding of crofts, but with the pasture still held in common, as it is to the present day, and an allotted strip of the machar.

The Lewis croft consists of a nominal five acres of crops, of oats, barley (or bere) and potatoes, sometimes with recent additions of turnips, and more often a small hay crop. The word 'nominal' is used because during the nineteenth century the croft had often been subdivided between two or more sons, without addition by reclamation to bring each subdivision up to the acreage of the original croft. Moreover, in the hilly southern part of the Island, cultivation is in little patches instead of in continuous fields. There, narrow ditches have been dug and the soil heaped up to form little ridges about ten feet by four, banked up by turf. These are known as *feannagan* in Gaelic, or in English, 'lazy-beds'—a term in use as early as the time of Burt, two hundred years ago. Thus only about two-

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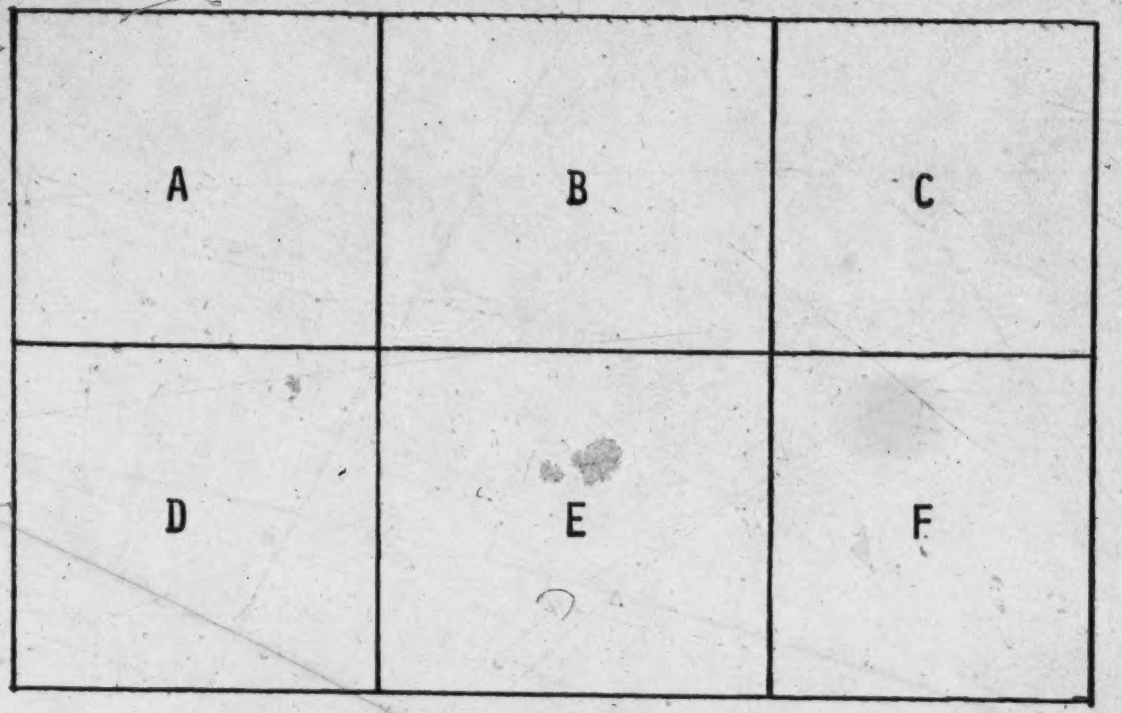

Chart of Positions of End Map
[Facing End Map]

3:Geddes K-4,5 (1919-1952) 1955 ES10 Highland Scots
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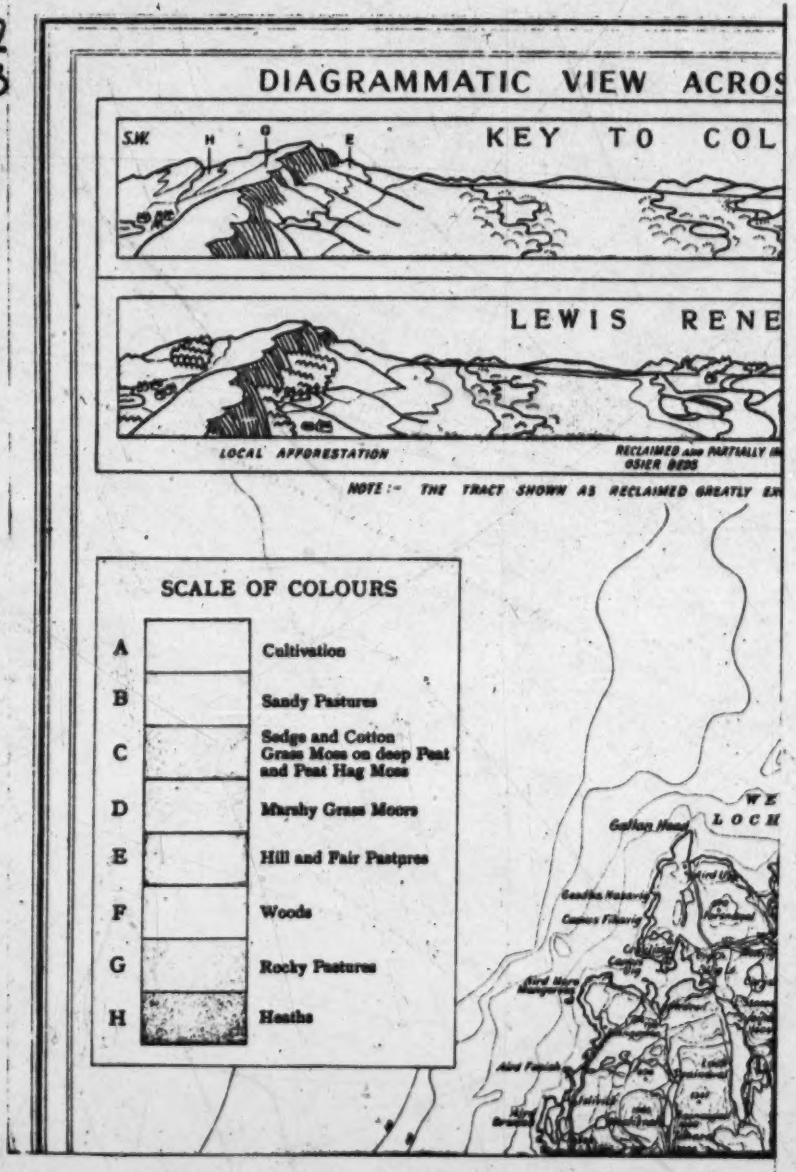

[End Map - A]

3:Geddes K-4,5 (1919-1952) 1955 ES10 Highland Scots
Lewis and Harris

[End Map - B]

3:Geddes K-4,5 (1919-1952) 1955 ES10 Highland Scots
Lewis and Harris

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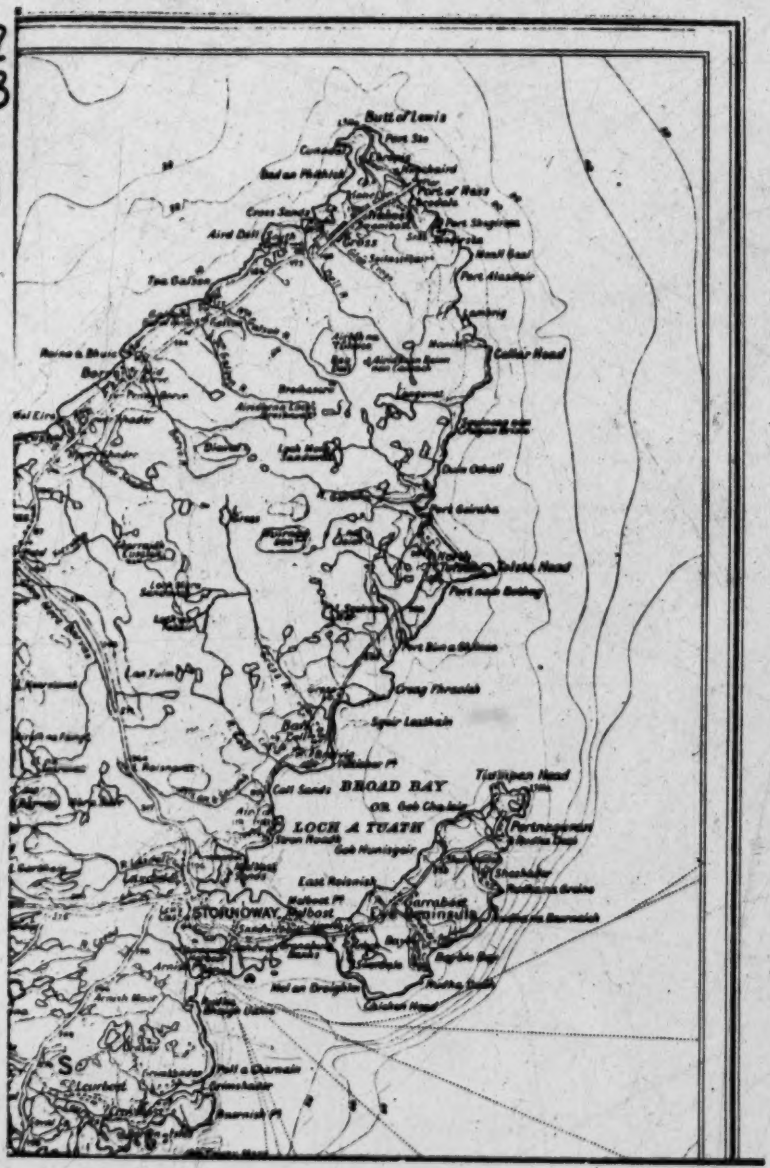

[End Map-C]

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Lewis and Harris

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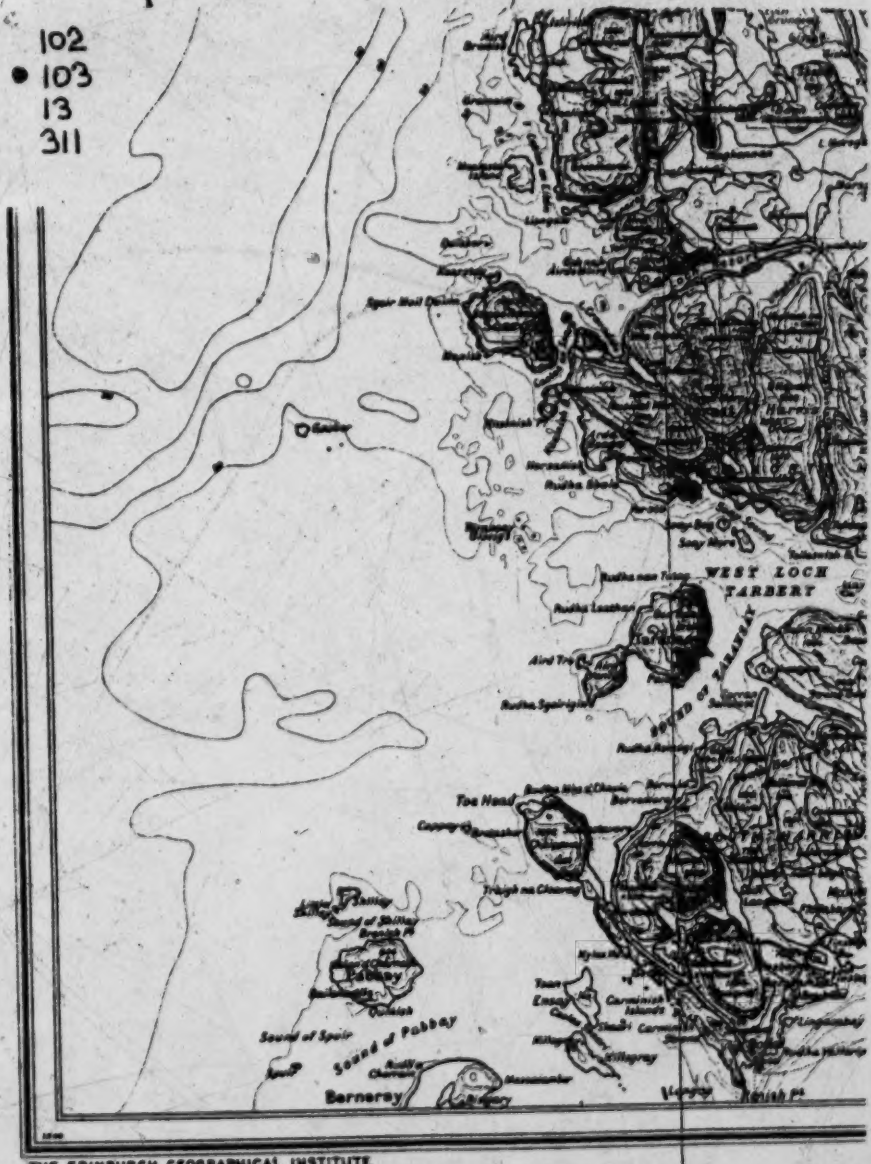

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[End Map-D]

3:Geddes K-4,5 (1919-1952) 1955 ES10 Highland Scots
Lewis and Harris

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[End Map-E]

3:Geddes K-4,5 (1919-1952) 1955 ES10 Highland Scots
Lewis and Harris

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VEGETATION OF LEWIS AND HARRIS

By Marcel Hardy, D.Sc. and Arthur Geddes, D.ès L., Ph.D.

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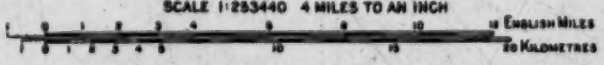

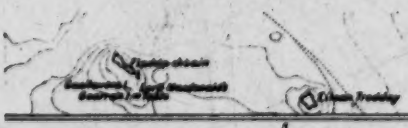

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[End Map-F]

4: Moisley et al. K-S (1959) 1962 ES10 Highland Scots ES10
Uig

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Figure 1.

/facing p. 1/

INTRODUCTION

131 The parish of Uig, Fig. 1, forms the south-west quadrant of Lewis; it falls naturally into three sections, each almost completely separated from the other by the salt waters of Loch Roag, Little Loch Roag and East Loch Roag.

133 South-west Uig is almost an island: only four miles separate the southern tip of Little Loch Roag and the head of Loch Resort which, penetrating deeply from the Atlantic, marks the boundary between Lewis and Harris. It is a mountainous area with fifteen miles of [491] exposed Atlantic coast between Loch Resort and Gallan Head. From the ultimate settlements, Breinish and Islivig, the main road (B 8011) takes a tortuous course of some 40 133 miles to Stornoway. Population is concentrated where soil and climatic conditions are 361 mitigated by the presence of machair (wind blown shell sand) and by the shelter afforded by the peninsulas of Aird Mhor Mangersta and Gallan Head. The chief settlements are thus around Uig Bay*, and on the western shores of Loch Roag. In addition each township has common pastures on the interior moors and mountains where shielings were maintained into the present century.

East of Little Loch Roag the road climbs over a moorland plateau at 250'-500' O. D.. More that 12 miles separates Enaclete, the last township on Little Loch Roag, from Garynahine, the first on East Loch Roag. The moor is uninhabited shooting and shieling ground; the population of this area is to be found to the north on Great Bernera, an island now connected by a bridge, and on the adjacent mainland shore.

[491] Eastwards again the inland continuation of East Loch Roag is a great peat-filled depression which connects with Loch Leurbost on the east coast. This depression is skirted on its northern side by the main road, to Stornoway, A 858. The boundary between the parishes of Uig and Lochs cuts across this depression, which contains the only inland townships of Lewis - Loch Ganvich and Achmore. On the north-eastern shores of East Loch Roag is to be found more than half the population of the parish of Uig. The succession of densely populated townships from Garynahine to Carloway is much more typical of Lewis than are the more scattered and generally smaller, settlements of south Uig which are more like those of Harris, the Uists and Barra.

The sketch map, figure 1, shows the location and boundaries of the townships and other lands within the parish, and also the main roads. The reader will find it necessary, however, to make constant use of either Bartholomew's Half-Inch, or Ordnance Survey One-Inch to one mile, maps. In general topographic names are spelled in accordance with the latter.

[103] * Uig: Vik, Old Norse for a bay.

townships and at Islivig and Breanish, the peat is thin (or has been stripped) to reveal a gravelly dirft,[1] free-draining on suitable slopes. In such places a black loamy soil has been developed by cultivation; the many ditches of lazybed cultivation are not necessary and, if the area is large enough, it can be worked by tractor. Such soils, in the climate of west Lewis, are eminently suitable for rotation grass, for hay or pasture, and much more could be done with them under knowledgeable management. Where shell sand has been blown inland on to peaty soils the natural top-dressing has had a remarkable ameliorating effect on texture and acidity. Such areas are all too limited, the most important are at Valtos, Kneep and Reef, and around Uig bay; smaller areas are at Mealasta, Mangersta and Bosta (Bernera). The hill grazings are dominated by a thin heather cover, blue moor grass and, in wetter places, sphagnum and cotton grass. Since the cattle population has been declining many older residents claim that the pastures, particularly near the townships, have deteriorated, the proportion of grass declining and coarse heather increasing. "The hills that were green when I was a boy", said one, "are now black". Neglected arable and pasture land, too, soon reverts. Rushes and flags invade the ditches between the old lazy beds and, if the ground is at all waterlogged, soon invade the beds as well. Drier ground, if not well grazed, soon reverts to heather. The limited machairs are little better; almost devoid of humus, they show little development of soil profile, only a thin grey layer of turf roots; rabbits, or injudicious cultivation readily set off wind erosion. Only where the wind has provided a natural blend of peat and machair are conditions better. Such areas are very limited.

The climate is in many respects severe; no local statistics are available, but some for Stornoway and Benbecula are appended. The frequency of high winds has a bad effect on both vegetation and stock, but to some extent wind counteracts excessive moisture. Near sea-level, where all the townships are situated, frost and snow are almost unknown. Thus it is exposure to the wind that limits the outwintering of stock, not low temperatures; this suggests that if pastures could be improved in suitably sheltered places far more advantage might be taken of the relatively mild winter temperatures. It is believed that the sunshine record is particularly poor in the south, where clouds can frequently be seen hanging over the mountains when the sun is shining on Bernera and the area north east of East Loch Roag. The relatively dry and sunny period which commonly occurs in May and June ought to make for a good hay harvest; unfortunately the natural meadows, such as they are, are late starters, and the custom is to cut the grass when it has gone to seed. Thus hay is often being taken in September - one of the wettest months in the year.

CHAPTER TWO

SOME HISTORICAL ASPECTS

Evidence of pre-historic and other early settlements in the parish is afforded by the occurence of standing stones, brochs and duns. The Callanish circle and its satellites are by far the most remarkable ancient monument in the Hebrides, and testify to the former importance of the site even though today their precise significance may not be clear. Most of the duns are now little more than circular heaps of stones, but in that at Doune Carloway the double walls still stand to a considerable height. A later phase of settlement is recorded in the place names, a very large proportion of which contain Norse elements such as -nish, -vick, -bost and -shader; it seems probable that most of the present township sites have been more or less continuously occupied since Norse times.

1. [Presumably the author means "drift"--Analyst]

4: Moisley et al. K-5 (1959) 1962 ES10 Highland Scots ES10
Uig

102
103
131
133
134
632

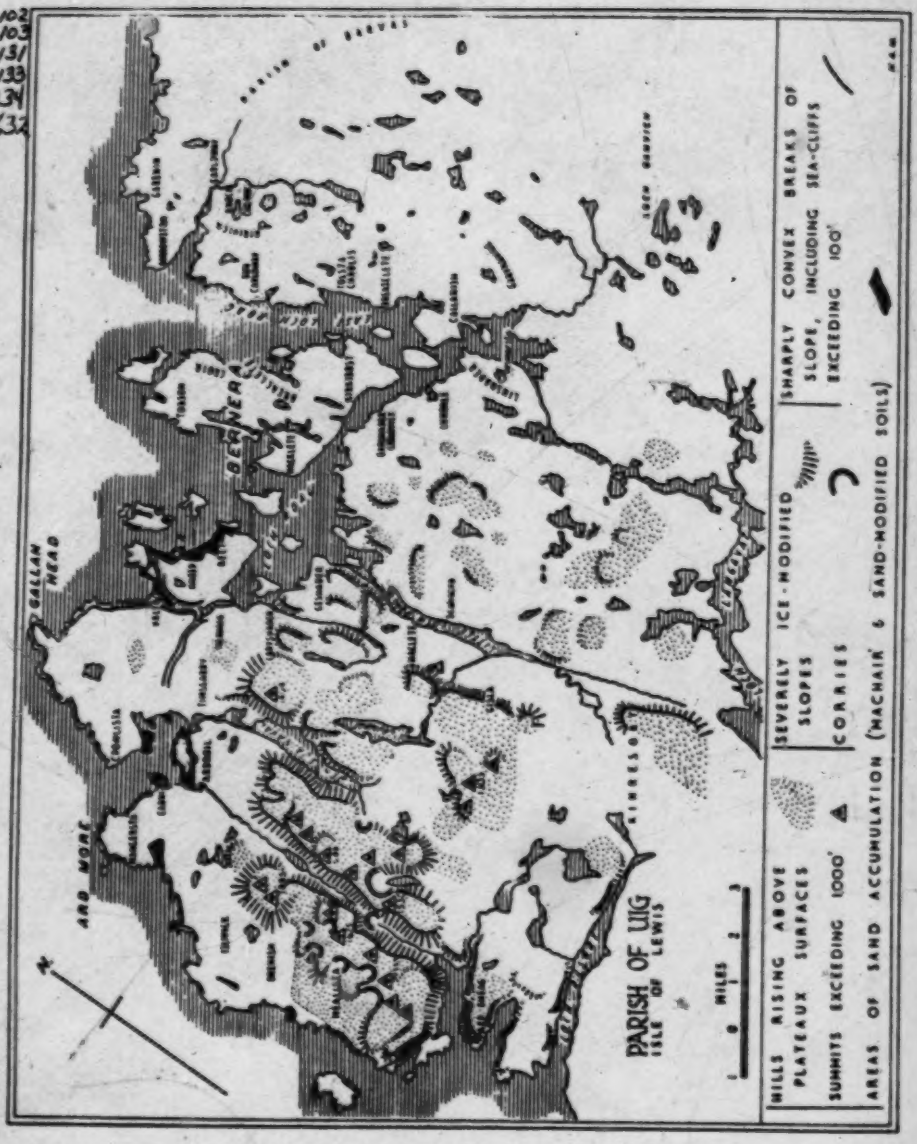

Figure 2.

/p. 2/

The new proprietor was no better placed than Seaforth to change the fundamental causes of recurrent poverty and distress. But at least he had funds to ameliorate his tenants' lot and to allow experiments in land reclamation and industrial development. Existing sheep farms were extended and others formed. Land reclamation went forward hand in hand with industrial experiments such as distillation of paraffin from peat and brick and tile-making. A programme of road building was begun (the first roads beyond Stornoway were begun in 1791, but there were only 45 miles of road by 1836). In Uig the results were very obvious. Further clearances took place particularly from Timsgarry, Carnish (21 tenants), Reef (22 tenants), Garynahine, Dun Carloway. The small tenants of Valtos and Kneep were only saved from eviction by the intervention of the Fisheries Board, for they were important places for white fishing. By the 1850's, although the population of Uig was more than double that in 1755, and 60% greater than in 1800, it was crowded into little more than half the area. Emigration enforced by clearances reduced the population of Bernera and South Uig by nearly 500 between 1851 and 1861.

No other part of Lewis saw so many farms; nowhere else did the small tenants suffer so much from eviction. That was not all. Those who remained undisturbed were deprived of some of their traditional grazings and access to the rest was sometimes restricted. Moreover they had to make room for many of the evicted families in their own townships, thereby further increasing the problem of congestion caused by the rapid natural increase of population. Thus, for example, about 1825 there had been 22 families in Valtos and Kneep. By about 1880 there were almost 100. But, during the same period these townships were deprived of their island grazings - Pabay, Vacsay, Floday and Wiay - formerly used for wintering cattle - and of part of their hill grazings (the traditional shielings). Use of the hill-grazings was restricted, too. Thus, for example, only one day was allowed to pull heather for ropes; if men were away fishing or for other reasons, could not attend on that day, they risked punishment by going on any other. Such stories could be multiplied many times.

In the Bernera district, by the 1850's, only Tobson, Bosta and Breaclete (on the island) and Earshader and Crulivig (on the mainland) were left for the crofter families. Moreover their traditional summer grazings, which lay south east of the Deer Forest which was formed out of the Scaliscro sheep farm about 1850. Apparently their use of the old shielings was tolerated until 1878, after which date they were directed to the area north of the present road and which they have continued to use until the present day. Thus the shieling huts shown in fig.5 all post-date 1878; the area in which they lie may have been part of the West Earshader tacksman's holding. The date of discontinuance of that tack is not known but the house, now empty, was for long occupied by squatters and the old lasy beds around it still form part of a large squatter holding.

It is noteworthy that almost all the clearances were in the Bernera and South Uig districts and this is reflected in population changes between 1841 and 1851, shown in table 4.

The cleared areas included extensive hill and mountain grazings and some of the best wintering ground, including all the machairs except Valtos and Kneep. The East Loch Roag and Carloway districts were less attractive to the new farmers; as is so commonly the case in Lewis, their rough grazings lay on gently sloping low plateaux and were consequently ill-drained and of poor quality. About 1852 Dun Carloway was let as a tack but was never successfully farmed and was soon returned to crofter-occupation; it may never have been wholly cleared of crofters. Garynahine, at the southern end of East Loch Roag, next to Linshader, was also turned into a farm about 1852. Here the hill grazing was more extensive and, though seriously reduced by a crofter settlement scheme c. 1936, it remains

TABLE 8

THE RE-SETTLEMENT OF UIG, ISLE OF LEWIS

(See also Fig. 10).

103
175
178
361
427
632

This table may not be complete for the earlier years; acreages are approximate

Date:	Farm:	Township	New Holdings	Holdings enlarged	Area (Acres)
1878	Linshader	Kirkibost	26(1)	-	c.1,300
1880	Hacklete	Hacklete	20	-	c.1,000
1886 (?)	Linshader	Borroston	-	-	500
1886	Dalemore	Carloway	-	-	60
1891	Linshader	Lundale	6	-	1,156
1892	Linshader	Kirkibost	-	26	1,000
1893	Linshader	Hacklet & Breaclet	-	32	314
		Valtos	-	30	c.300
1910	Mangersta	Mangersta	13	-	2,250
1912	Dalemore	Garenin	-	27	c.700
1921	Reef	Reef	15	-	1,254
		Aird & Reef	-	10	206
		Crowlista & Knoep	-	43	105
		Garyshader	-	13	88
1921	Timsgarry	Timsgarry	8	-	4,113 (2)
		Enaclete	-	9	621
		Geshader	-	11	} 603 (3)
		Ungshader	-	4	
1921	Croir	Croir	8	-	522
1921	Carnish & Ardroil	Carnish	6	-	288
		Ardroil	14	-	797
		Carnish & Ardroil common grazing			7,153
1921	Mealasta	Mangersta	-	10	1,868
		Brenish	-	29	4,116
1921	Dalemore	Garenin	-	27	c.300
1925	Linshader	Linshader	10	-	11,109
1932	Uig Lodge	Ard Bheag	2	-	809
1935	Garynahine	Garynahine	12	-	1,915
			140	245	about 45,000

Notes: (1) Crofters were moved to Kirkibost from Bosta (425 acres), which was given as an enlargement to Tobson crofters.
(2) Partly off Timsgarry.
(3) Partly off Carnish and Ardroil.

• 103 231 241 233 311 427 423 632

APPENDIX A

(1) Agricultural statistics for South Uig - August, 1959.

Township etc.	Number of holdings: Crofts	Others	Effective agricultural units	Arable land: Oats	Potatoes	Hay	Pasture (acres)	Horses	Cattle: Sown	Milk	Others	Calves	Sheep: Sown	Ewes	Lambs	Others	Swine	Poultry
ARD DHEAS	-	1	1	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	c.500	?	?		
BRENISH	28	-	13	16	4	26	100	11	84	18	15	13	508	303	143	568	4	1
ISLIVIG	10	-	5	7	2	11	30	3	49	6	3	4	228	224	174	105	2	-
MANGISTA	13	-	10	12	3	17	23	3	68	16	9	13	385	476	334	371	1	-
CARNISH	6	-	3	2	1	4	61	4	26	4	1	4	270	110	89	40	1	-
ARDROIL	18	-	11	7	2	21	321	13	62	15	5	9	625	358	277	171	1	-
TIMSGARRY	8	-	7	5	1	12	63	7	27	8	-	4	275	177	143	108	1	-
HARRIS ETC.	-	2	2	1	1	2	4	1	-	2	-	1	-	38	35	5	-	-
AIRD	10	-	8	4	1	9	35	8	36	6	2 (Goats)	1	206	226	193	166	-	-
CROWLISTA	24	-	13	16	7	19	59	6	89	15	3	9	414	487	374	227	-	-
VILTOS	40	1	29	22	7	15	104	19	230	41	1	29	1,033	916	781	534	-	-
BREIF	19	-	13	11	7	19	118	10	76	14	6	9	455	403	337	247	1	-
REIF	15	-	8	5	2	9	77	7	45	7	3	9	225	249	202	190	-	-
CARNIBRAE	14	1	12	6	4	9	26	3	32	8	3 (2 Goats)	4	183	199	176	110	1	-
GEARRAIDH	11	-	11	14	3	16	82	10	38	15	4	11	337	594	462	415	-	-
UNGSHADER	4	-	3	5	1	7	23	3	17	3	1	2	150	130	125	125	-	-
ENACLETT	9	-	9	13	3	13	44	6	32	14	2	12	323	335	247	308	-	-
OTHERS (non-crofting)	-	5	5	3	1	7	59	2	-	2 (12 pigs & 2 goats)	14	12	-	295	210	231	-	1

Notes:

(a) The total areas of common and intye land for each township are given in the text.

(b) Sumings have been calculated according to the rent operative at the date when the grazing regulations were first made unless some other rent is specifically quoted in the regulations.

(c) The sheep totals are known to be incomplete but the proportions (ewes/lambs/others) are as reported (see Appendix A (2)).

(d) Where there is a specific sum for a horse this has been added, (half to the cattle sums and half to the sheep sums) after allowing for any horses actually present.

(e) Where there is a sum for two-year old cattle this has been included in the cattle sums at the rate of 2 two-year olds to one cow.

CHAPTER NINE

THE ISLAND OF BERNERA AND ADJACENT DISTRICTS OF THE MAINLAND OF LEWIS

('Bernera and Bernera Shore')

by

P. Wheeler

Of the three main sections of the parish of Uig, the Bernera district, consisting of Bernera Island (Breaclete, Croir, Hacklete, Kirkibost and Tobson) and the "Shore" (Earshader, Crulivig and Lundale together with the isolated township of Linshader), presents a number of peculiarities due not primarily to physical conditions, but to isolation. Bernera Island, though central to most of Uig and easily accessible over the sheltered waters of Loch Roag, yet remained relatively inaccessible overland until the recent building of the road bridge; even now it is necessary to travel over six miles to get from the bridge to the main Uig road and a further four miles to Garynahine. Consequently the Island, even more than the adjacent mainland settlements, has a very close-knit and self-sufficing population. Whether this community retains sufficient vitality to resist the destructive effect of better communications in addition to the general forces eroding rural and especially Highland life, remains to be seen.

The district shares the unpropitious physical characteristics described in the Introduction. Like the other districts it has virtually no valuable mineral resources (1), and the herring and white fish industries have all but disappeared and seem unlikely to be resuscitated. Lobster fishing is, however, prosecuted with vigour and enterprise; it provides a good living but only for a small group of families. The rest depend on regular or casual employment to eke out the proceeds of the croft. The kinds of work available, and the problems of permanent or seasonal absence in search of employment are common to the whole parish; thus this account is mainly concerned with the problems of crofting agriculture.

Settlement: history and patterns.

The pattern of settlement in this inhospitable and discouraging environment is partly very old, and partly very recent. At least four brochs are known on Bernera and various standing stones of even earlier date, while continuous settlement has survived from the early Christian era. Traces of old patterns and practices remain, in tangible form as in the graveyard on little Bernera, or in oral tradition. All this contributes towards the very close network of family relationships that binds the island folk and to a lesser extent those of the adjacent mainland.

With the exceptions of Tobson, Bosta and Breaclete, all Bernera Island had been cleared by 1851. Resettlement began in 1878 when twelve families were moved from Bosta to Kirkibost, and continued at Hacklete in 1880, and subsequently elsewhere. Occasionally (as at Kirkibost) old, pre-clearance lotting patterns were re-adopted, but usually settlement was laid out afresh. The townships of Bernera Shore, were also affected: all the small tenants except those of Earshader and Crulivig were cleared, leaving the land under the sheep farms of West Earshader and Linshader. However, the Bernera Island crofters were allowed to continue their customary use of sheilings on the mainland, and the transfer in 1880 of these grazings to their present position marked the

(1) A small deposit of diatomite has been exploited in Kirkibost since 1959. Only a few men are employed and the number is not likely to increase.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 61]

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE CARLOWAY DISTRICT

by

Brian Loughbrough

The seven crofting townships of Upper Carloway, (including Carloway Park), Borroweston, Garenin, Knock Carloway, Dun Carloway and Kirivick form a compact area of land in the north of the Parish of Uig bordering the coast and Loch Carloway. Here the Lewisian gneiss has a thin discontinuous covering of glacial drift which is most extensively developed immediately above the head of Loch Carloway. Three valleys help to determine the layout of the townships and settlements (figure 37). The townships to the north-west of the Carloway river are found on more gentle slopes than those to the south east where the slopes are less uniform and are less uniform and are often broken by short steep rocky faces. The north western area therefore offers an environment where almost continuous cultivation is possible whereas in the south east the frequent rock outcrops have led to fragmented cultivation on minute plots which are inaccessible to the tractor or other mechanised implements.

The soils are heavy and acid even on the skinned land of the boulder clay slopes nor is there any machair to mitigate the acidity of the peaty areas which descend almost to the shores. Only in one place is there any trace of the influence of the sand and this is to be found where the crofts numbered 1 to 3 Garenin border the small bay in the north of that township. Here the fierce gales have blown some of the finer beach deposits on to the croft land.

Much of the peat has been cut from the inner common pastures except in the case of Upper Garloway where active cutting is still taking place in the valley whose flanks are occupied by squatter settlements, to the east of the football pitch. On the common pasture the vegetation varies from peat moss and heather with bracken to fescue and close turf on the skinned land by the road to Dalemore. On the upper common pasture heather and bracken have increased since the abandonment of the shielings and the reduction of the cattle stock; many inhabitants remember that the hills once had a much greener aspect. Nor is this a feature confined to the common pastures; on one croft in Upper Carloway 1.9 acres are completely covered by heather whilst a neighbouring croft has a good crop of oats on similar land. At the loch in both Knock and Upper Carloway areas of former arable land have reverted to moss, the old lazy beds being picked out by lines of reeds.

Settlement. The settlement pattern is one of great interest for it shows in a clear way the effects of the distrinct phases in the historical geography of the area. The evidence of success and failure stands side by side. Before attempting to justify this assertion it is necessary to give a brief account of the physical evolution and distribution of settlement.

The origin of permanent settlement is believed * to have been the permanent occupation of shielings used by people from Bernera until the eighteenth century. Until about 1850 arable land was held run-rig and the houses were huddled together intight little clusters. When individual crofts were lotted, about 1850, the houses werescattered, each on its croft and generally up to fifty yards from the present road (which was then no more than a rough track). Sea access was then most important but since the advent of modern road transport new houses have been built nearer to the roads, producing the modern markedly linear plan. The roads extend at different heights across the slopes

* based on information supplied by Mr Macleod of 27 Garenin.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 101]

THE MAKING OF THE CROFTING LANDSCAPE

All landscapes in these islands have roots in the distant past; Park is no exception. Yet many crofting landscapes have been significantly re-fashioned within the present century after major changes in the nineteenth century. Park does not entirely correspond to the general pattern, and the present cultural landscape has its beginnings in the late seventeenth century, although there are traces of earlier settlement.

Archaeological evidence, in the form of a stone axehead found near Habost, a dun on the brackish Loch Cromore, and a mediaeval chapel on Eilean Calum Cille, provides the earliest record of human settlement in Park. Place-name evidence[1] indicates Norse occupation: the elements 'bost', a contraction of the Norse word bolstradr - a homestead, and 'setr', a shed or bothy situated on pastureland but not regularly lived in, indicate a thin dispersion of farmers practising an extensive and transhumant economy: all the present township names contain Norse elements.

The name Park, is derived from the Gaelic 'A'Phairc' - the park or deer forest: the old name of the district was Oservaul (Norse: the east mountain). During the eighteenth century, a dyke or turf wall was built between Loch Erisort and Loch Seaforth - 'garadh an tighearna' - the lord of chiefs' dyke, to enclose the deer forest. Before this enclosure was built, Park was shieling ground used by tenants in Uig (west Lewis):- one of the groups of shielings has the name Airigh Dhomhnaill Chaim and Domhnall Cam was chief of the MacAulays in Uig at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Thus it may well be that after the Norse population left or were absorbed, Park was simply used as summer pasture.

It is believed that settlement in what is now the Deer Forest began about 1650. Confirmation of this comes from an unpublished Gaelic song by Archibald MacDonald (An Ciaran Mabach) composed in Leith soon after 1660. In the song, the author laments the fact that he may never see the Forest again, and says of Park

"'s oil leam caradh na frithe
.....
Bhith fo bhinn aig na bodaich
D'am bu chosnadh cas-chrom."

"I deplore the state of the forest ..... that it should be in subjection to the carles whose livelihood is a cas-chrom" (foot plough - literally crooked spade). The song gives no indication of numbers, and unfortunately no rental of this period is extant.[2]

From rentals and other evidence, Park was the last area in Lewis to be colonised in permanent settlement; the fact that the population of Lochs parish increased from 912 in 1755 to 1350 in 1801, supports the view that the late eighteenth century saw the extension of modern settlement in Park.

The first documentary evidence of settlement in the present crofting area is the Judicial Rental of Lewis, taken by the Forfeited Estates Commissioners in 1718. This rental records tacksmen, or major tenants, living in Habost, Seaforthhead, and Eilean Calum Cille - all situated along the southern shores of Loch Erisort: there is local tradition that Kershader and Marivig were shielings

1 The editor is indebted to Miss Bridget M. Gordon, B.A., B.Litt. for an analysis and evaluation of the place-name evidence - see Appendix C.

2 For this extremely interesting information and the translation, the editor is indebted to Mr. William Matheson, M.A., of the Department of Celtic, Edinburgh University.

Table XIX summarises the population structure and trends for the four districts. It is significant that the two districts without service centres, which provide a range of ancillary employment, have experienced more severe depopulation since 1939. This table also underlines the fact that earnings from seasonal employment are insufficient: the incidence of permanent employment furth of the districts is three times as great as the incidence of seasonal employment.

APPENDIX B

SHIELINGS - A NOTE

John E. Wearmouth with illustrations by Beth Blowers

From Figure 1, compiled from the First Edition six-inch map of the Ordnance Survey (1850 to 1852) and from personal observations, it is clear that the shieling system was at one time an overall feature of Park for the whole peninsula has traces of this transhumant economy.

The rudimentary structures, some of turf, others of stones and roofed with bracken or heather thatch, are all sited on well drained sites, the majority on mounds. Almost all the sites are close to lochs or streams. The majority are in loose groups of from two to nine buildings, although there are some in isolation; no site has as many as twenty-six buildings as found at Airidh na Gaoithe in North Uist.

There appears to be two distinctive shapes of building - oval and rectangular (Fig.10). All shielings measured exhibited a remarkable similarity in dimensions, from 17½ by 9 feet to 13 by 12 feet. The oval structures are generally larger than the rectangular ones. Most of the shielings had two entrances, often, but not always, opposite each other.

The shieling system died out in Park about 1880 but the cattle continued to graze around the shielings on the better grass, and the crofters had still to go out to milk the cattle at the shieling, although they no longer lived there. The sheep still use the mounds for shelter and grazing. These features of an obsolete economy are still easily recognisable from the luxuriant grass cover in a wilderness of peat bog and bare rock.

APPENDIX C

NORSE SETTLEMENTS NAMES IN NORTHERN PARK, LEWIS

Bridget M. Gordon, B.A., B.Litt.

See: Magne Oftedal, The Village Names of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides; in Norsk Tidskrift for Sprogvidenskap, vol. XVII, 1954, (Oslo), pp. 363 ff.

Professor Oftedal points out the difficulties of these Norse-Gaelic settlement names: inaccurate spellings even in modern times, and lack of any useful evidence from older sources, make almost all the derivations a matter of conjecture. Sometimes two or more ON equivalents are possible (e.g. for Calbost), sometimes no satisfactory solution can be found (e.g. for Lemreway). Since Professor Oftedal frequently bases his explanation on pronunciations not recorded in written forms, his evidence is largely followed here.
SHIELDERNISH: the second element is N nes, 'headland'. Oftedal's explanation of the first as silda, genitive plural of N síld, 'herring', is satisfactory linguistically, but seems unlikely in meaning.

103 HABOST: 'high farmstead'. N. hár, 'high'. bost from N bólstaðr, 'farmstead', generally a farm of some local importance, but not the original settlement.

KERSHADER: 'shieling of the marsh or thicket'. - shader is N setr, 'shieling', a shed usually at some distance from the main farm and at the summer pastureland. ker- may represent either N kjarr, 'thicket, overgrown marsh'; or hjart, from hjǫrtr, 'deer'. (Oftedal prefers the latter; both are found in other place-names, but hjart - is more common in the Hebrides).

GARYVARD: Oftedal interprets this as a Gaelic name containing a Norse loanword: he says the initial g is of a palatal quality, showing that it was formerly followed by a palatal vowel e, and derives gary - from gearraidh, a Gaelic loanword from N gerði, 'pasture denoting specifically "the grassy ground immediately surrounding a house or a shieling". He thinks the second element is Gaelic a'Bhàird, 'of the poet, or bard'. Hence, Garyvard means 'the poet's pasture'.

CAVERSTA: the second element is N staðir, 'farm', a plural form frequent in place-names, denoting a small farm. Oftedal hesitantly derives caver - from a N personal name Kofri, genitive Kofra. It may possibly be associated with N kofa, plural kofur, 'young puffin'.

TORASTA: the second element is N staðir, 'farm', as in Caversta. The first is almost certainly a personal name: Oftedal's note on the pronunciation of the middle syllable points to the name Torfi, genitive Torfa; possibly a name in pór-, e.g. pórðs-, 'belonging to pórðr'.

CROMORE: Oftedal explains this as a Gaelic name crò mór, 'big pen, fold'. krǫ́ or krá in N, however, means primarily 'corner, nook, inlet' and the two names Cromore and Crobeg are here applied to places on big and little inlets. The N kro took the meaning 'pen, fold' from Gaelic, but usually retains N inflections in the names of Lewis.

MARIVIG: -vig, more commonly -aig, is N vik, 'bay, inlet'. The first element may be either N marr, gen. pl. mara, 'horse'; or N marr, gen. sg. marar 'sea'. The latter seems more likely here.

CALBOST: - bost is N bólstaðr, 'farmstead' as in Habost. The first element could be either N kald- 'cold'; or N kálfr, gen. pl. kálfa, 'calf'.

GRAVIR: 'pits, graves'. N grafir, plural of grpf, 'pit, hole, grave.'

LEMREWAY, LIMERVAY: the second element is N vagr, 'bay, inlet'. Oftedal is baffled by the first; the pronunciation shows that, if it is a N word, the stem vowel was ei or œ (ǿ).

ORONSAY: originally the name of the island in the bay. -ay is N ey, 'island'; oros- from N árfiris, 'ebb-tide' (very frequent in names of islands isolated only at high tide).

STIEMERWAY: the second element is N vagr, 'bay', as in Limerway. Stiemer- is obscure; the narrowness of the stream at low-tide points to N stemma, 'to dam, block, obstruct (a river or stream)', but the development of the name is not clear.

SEAFORTH: 'inlet or fjord of the sea'; anglicised spelling of N sæ-fjǫrðr.

N = Norse
Ǫ and ǿ may be represented by ö
ð may be (inaccurately) represented by d,
þ may be (inaccurately) represented by th.

102
103
131

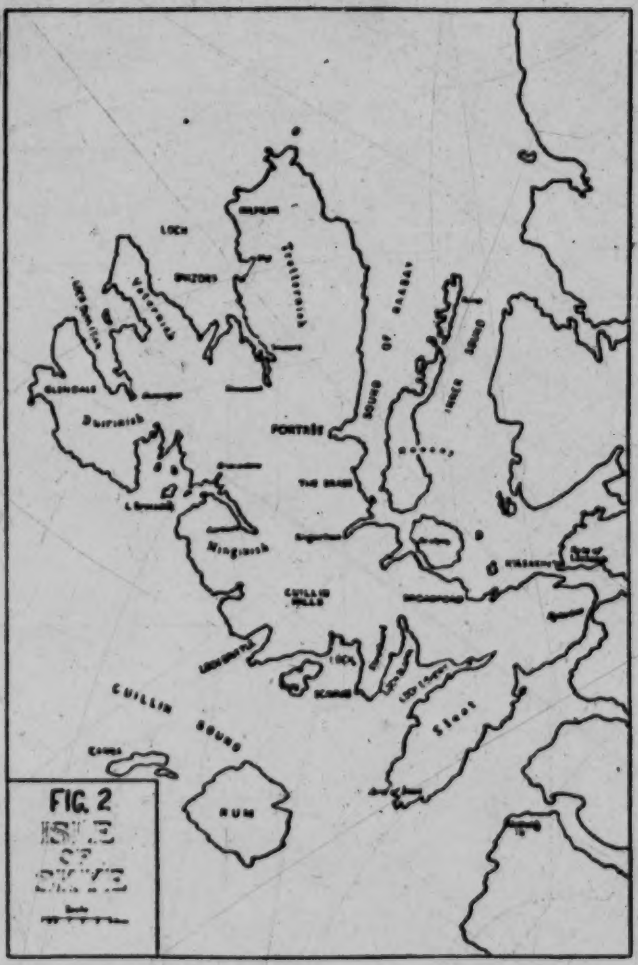

FIG. 2
ISLE
OF
SKYE

population as it is one of accessibility. It is, for example, only 165 miles from Glasgow to Mallaig, but the trip takes six hours because of the constant succession of curves and the series of severe gradients over which the railroad runs.

The General Appearance of Skye

Skye has an irregular shape. Large peninsulas extend out into the Minch on the northwest and into the Sea of the Hebrides on the southwest. Promontories, divided by sea lochs, reach out to the west and east. Numerous small lochs and several large, sheltered bays contribute to the greatly indented coastline. While philologists may doubt the derivation of the Gaelic name for the Island, Eilean Sgiathanach, from the Gaelic sgiath (a wing), "the winged isle" aptly describes Skye.

From the mainland, the Island appears to be dominated by the jagged silhouette of the Cuillin Hills. Rising in fifteen angular peaks, these mountains are the first indication that the surface of Skye is as irregular as its shape. The characteristic typological features of the Island are the result of volcanic action in the Tertiary period of the Cenozoic and subsequent erosion, particularly during the Pleistocene when glacial ice flows gouged and scoured the landscape.[1] Geologically Skye consists of an extensive basalt plateau; two intrusive masses, one of gabbro and the other of granite; and a complex of older differentiated strata and outcroppings which include Juriassic and Cambrian limestone, Torridonian sandstone, and Archaean gneiss.

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[1] F. Fraser Darling, "Relief, Landforms, Vegetation, and Communications," The West Highland Survey, F. Fraser Darling et al. (mimeographed, 1950), Part II, pp. 26-28.

133 South of the basalt plateau, the Cuillins and the Red
34 Hills have intruded into the lava. Although the Cuillins
dominate the landscape for many miles, they are absolutely
103 useless agriculturally. Indeed, a case might be made for the
derivation of the name Cuillin from the Welsh coolin (worth-
less).[3] The worthlessness of the mountains in the local
economy is attested by the fact that they are the only mountains
in Scotland with peaks named after men, all of them mountain
133 climbers of the last century.[4] At the same time, however,
34 they have become a valuable asset in the tourist trade.[5] The
103 Red Hills rise to 2,537 feet. They are mostly covered with
scree and skeletal soils, but they have some pastoral value.
All have traditional Gaelic names.

133 Below the mountainous region a broad limestone valley
extends across the island from Broadford Bay to Lochs Eishort
[13] and Slapin. Like northern Skye, it is a gently rolling region
with few rises which exceed 500 feet in elevation. The po-
tentially good soil is frequently masked by a heavy overlie of
peat.

[131] Sleat, the southernmost peninsula, reveals a compli-
cated structure, a complex of ancient rocks and moraine.[6]

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[3] B.H. Humble, The Cuillin of Skye (London: Robert Hale, 1952), pp. 3-4.

[4] Ibid., p. xv.

[5] W. A. Poucher, The Magic of Skye (London: Chapman and Hall, 1949); E. G. Meadows, The Skye Scene (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1951); and Humble, op. cit., pp. 31-106.

[6] Darling, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

132 summer, despite the long duration of daylight, the average daily hours of sunshine are six. In winter, the daily hours of sunshine are reduced to less than one. In 1953, an average year in respect to sunlight, the total hours of sun were 1142. Over 132 200 hours were recorded in June but less than 20 in December. It 103 may be that the philologists are right in insisting that Eilean Sgiathanach is derived from the Norse ski (cloud). Certainly the poetic name for Skye, Eilean a Cheo, the Isle of Mist, is in keeping with the atmosphere.

The prevailing rain and cloudiness are serious handicaps to agriculture, but they are not the only inhibitive forces. The wind is another very important factor. Gales are common. They restrict the number and variety of crops which can be grown, hinder tree growth, and often make the use of the sea impossible.

The System of Land Use

311 The Sgiathanach, the Skyeman, is a small farmer who combines pastoralism with a limited amount of agriculture. In view of the severe environmental limitations on crop production and the markedly disproportionate ratio of arable land to natural grass land, this ecological adaptation of the culture is by no means surprising. Nor is the fact that this adaptation has persisted since the first known appearance of man a startling revelation. This was four thousand years ago when the culture history of Skye began with the advent of the Neolithic. This persistence is simply an expression of the

172 311 311

of an administrative center. The government offices, however, are scattered about the village. One is down at the pier; another is half way out of Portree on a trunk road, and still a third is tucked away on a side road down by the shore of the harbor. The post office is behind the court house, on the opposite end of the village, and the school, the only secondary school in all the Hebrides of the County of Inverness, is out of the village all together on another trunk road. For northern Skye, Portree is the shopping center. The shops are along the main streets which run off the square and along the road which leads down to the pier. All of them are in remodeled houses. For the immediate area surrounding the village, Portree is a religious center. The churches stand together, except one which is on the opposite side of the village; the ministers' homes are dispersed on the fringes of the village. Long ago Portree was known as Ceilltarraglan, (burying place at the foot of the glen). The old village was no more than a church, school, inn, and jail which stood overlooking the houses of a few fishermen along the bay. The surrounding area was given over to farming. The differing ages of the buildings show how the village spread along the bay, up over the terraces, out across the flats, and finally, with the assistance of the County Council which has built all of the new houses, on to the hill which overlooks the shops and the harbor. Although only the jail remains as a sentinel of the past, the differing ages of the houses also tell how the population grew from a mere handful to 1000 in over a century and a half.

*175 been more or less autonomous and self-sufficient. Significantly, [103] the names of these farms, as most place names for lochs and headlands, are Norse.[60]

*175 24 Crops and Their Care. The crops of Skye were essentially those introduced during the Neolithic.[61] The staples were oats and barley. The local varieties were unproductive in comparison to the varieties common in the Lowlands, but they were regarded as better against the wind and rain than the more productive grains. A little flax and hemp was grown, but not enough for local needs. Only the chiefs and a few tacksmen had kitchen gardens; most of the people grew no vegetables.

Although cultivation was of secondary importance, it was basic to the economy. The land was prepared by a large and cumbersome four-horse plough or a small foot plough. The foot plough, called the caschrom (literally the crooked foot), was the most common implement on Skye. To a naturally curved oak or ash shaft, a long, flat coulter with an iron shoe was fastened with iron rings. At the junction of the head and the shaft a wooden peg was inserted for the foot. Although it was slow and laborious in use, the caschrom enabled the user to get better yields from his rigs than by ploughing. For many it was the only means of tilling the soil, unless a tacksman ploughed the small, rocky strip for his tenant. In terms of

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[60] Henderson, op. cit., pp. 131-133.

[61] The following description, unless otherwise documented, is drawn from the following sources: Martin, op. cit., pp.190-250; Mitchell, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 182-183, 220-221; and Ronald MacDonald, "The Isle of Skye in 1764, as Described by John Walker," TGSI, Vol. XXVIII (1918), pp. 101-130.